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Date: February 15, 2012

To: Phil Isenberg, Chair
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Mike Machado, Executive Director
Delta Protection Commission
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From: Campbell Ingram
Executive Officer
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Subject: Delta Conservancy's Role with Regard to Economic Development in the Delta

At the February 9, 2012, Council meeting, I provided comments concerning the Delta Conservancy's role with regard to economic development in the Delta. With the expectation of upcoming discussions between Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) Staff and the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) regarding the recommendations in the DPC's *Proposal to Protect, Enhance, and Sustain the Unique Cultural, Historical, Recreational, Agricultural and Economic Values of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as an Evolving Place*, I wanted to take this opportunity to inform the Council and the Commission of the Delta Conservancy's efforts to define our role and anticipated programs with regard to economic development in the Delta. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in upcoming discussions with the DPC.

In structuring the Delta Conservancy to reflect our co-equal responsibilities, we have developed an Ecosystem Restoration Program and an Economic Development Program. We anticipate our Economic Development Program will run directed action and grant proposal programs to solicit, review, and fund high priority projects. Objectives and priorities for funding would be informed by the Economic Sustainability Plan and by our Strategic Plan, as called out in our enabling legislation (PRC 32360 et seq.). We propose establishing a Board for Economic Development as a standing committee of our full Board, which will have oversight of program and funding decisions. Five of our 11 voting members are county supervisors or their

designees from each of the five Delta Counties. We welcome the direct participation of the DPC in review and decision making for economic development activities led by the Conservancy. This could be achieved by having the DPC as a voting member on the Board of the Economic Development Program.

As part of our strategic plan development efforts, we have been meeting with Delta interests to get their input on how we should develop programs to achieve our mandates and help them achieve their objectives. We have been asking very direct questions to get their feedback on, for example, how can the Delta Conservancy play a meaningful role in increasing recreation and tourism opportunities. The feedback we have been getting has been very encouraging and we look forward to implementing programs responsive to those needs. To date we have held 8 public meetings throughout the Delta. We have met with the five Delta County Supervisors, their key staff, and their County Agriculture Commissioners, and we have met several times with the 5 County Farm Bureau Coalition and with many smaller organizations and individuals engaged in commerce and agriculture in the Delta. In addition we work continuously with a Strategic Plan and Policy Subcommittee of our governing Board. We anticipate that our strategic plan, expected to be complete by June 2012, will provide sufficient guidance for State led economic development in the Delta.

Additionally, we have begun working on a Delta Regional Finance Plan in which near-term regional funding needs will be quantified. With the support of the Conservancy Board, we have begun working with County Chief Administrative Officers, economic development staff, public works staff, and those involved with county HCP/NCCP efforts, to define financial needs for a reasonable level of expected economic development, restoration and flood protection activities in the next 5 to 10 years. We also we are contacting agencies and other organizations active in the Delta. We believe working collectively with Delta interests to quantify near-term reasonable expectations for projects (independent of the BDCP and Delta Plan) will develop a locally defined and supported set of priorities and associated costs. This finance plan, among other potential benefits, could inform future funding source debates including upcoming water bond discussions.

Charged with co-equal responsibilities of ecosystem restoration and economic development, the Conservancy has been working with Delta interests to define how we can be a partner to the Delta community. Four of our 12 legislative mandates are directly tied to economic development: 1) to preserve and protect agricultural and working landscapes, 2) to increase opportunities for recreation and tourism, 3) to preserve and protect the legacy communities, and 4) to increase the resilience of the Delta to natural disaster.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our efforts with you and look forward to working with the DSC and the DPC to define our future roles in manner that recognizes our overlapping mandates and that will ensure complementary and coordinated implementation.

cc: ✓ P. Joseph Grindstaff, Executive Officer, DSC
Dan Ray, Chief Deputy Executive Officer, DSC
Cindy Messer, Acting Deputy Executive Officer
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Board Members & Liaison Advisors